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Japan

Solid Wood Products

Record Imports of MDF

(Medium Density Fiberboard) in 2001

2002

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Report Highlights: In spite of declining production of fiberboard products, Japanese imports were up in 2001, with hardboard imports up 52.5% and MDF imports up 15.6%. Principal suppliers were New Zealand, Australia and Malaysia.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1], JA

Domestic distribution (shipments) of wood-based board products dropped 8.5% from the previous year to 191 million square meters in 2001, as a result of depressed demand for interior building products in both residential and industrial markets. The depressed demand was mostly due to the economic recession and stagnant housing starts, according to the Japan Fiberboard Industry Association. (See Table 1.)

Imports of board products, however, including particle board, hardboard, MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard) and insulation board, grew 10.3% from the previous year to 972,840 cubic meters in 2001. MDF imports grew 15.6%, with New Zealand, Australia and Malaysia standing out as Japan's key suppliers. (See Table 2) Although particle board and OSB imports grew only slightly in 2001, from the previous year, they accounted for 40% of the total fiberboard product imports.

Table 1: Japanese Domestic Fiberboard Production & Shipments in 2001				
Product	Production		Shipments	
	m3	% Change 1/	1,000 m2	% Change 1/
Hardboard	73,102	- 7.2%	21,898	- 11.8%
M.D.F.	432,678	- 3.2%	47,975	- 6.2%
Insulation Board	439,110	- 7.0%	42,178	- 5.6%
Particle board	1,255,687	- 0.4%	78,571	- 3.8%
Total	2,200,577	- 2.0%	190,622	- 8.5%

(Source: Japan Fiberboard Industry Association)

1/ % Changes from the previous year.

Table 2: Fiberboard Imports in 2001		
Product	m3	% Change 1/
Particle board / OSB	387,418	+ 0.8%
Hardboard 2/	44,052	+ 52.5%
M.D.F. 3/	540,454	+ 15.6%
Insulation board 4/	916	- 31.7%
Total	972,840	+ 10.3%

(Source: Japan Fiberboard Industry Association)

1/ % changes from the previous year.

2/ 37,445 metric tons, converted at the density of 0.85 g/cm3.

3/ 367,509 metric tons, converted at the density of 0.68 g/cm3.

4/ 275 metric tons, converted at the density of 0.3 g/cm3.

End of report.